

Maryland
Profile of State High School Exit Exam Policies

<i>State exit exam policy</i>	All students must pass the required sections of the Maryland High School Assessment (HSA). However, specific Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) course exams are acceptable substitutes for specific HSAs, provided students receive the specified MSDE-approved scores on the exams.
Type of test	End-of-course exams tied to content standards
Purpose	<p>The purpose of the exam is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine prospective high school graduates' knowledge and skill levels relative to those needed for entry-level employment* • Determine prospective high school graduates' knowledge and skill levels relative to those needed for postsecondary education* • Determine prospective high school graduates' mastery of the state curriculum • Encourage districts and schools to identify and serve students at risk of academic failure • Provide data to state policymakers on student attainment of state education goals to inform education policy decisions • Increase alignment of local curriculum and programs of instruction with state education standards • Promote equity of opportunity across all student groups • Meet a state mandate <p>* These tests are approximately on a 10th-grade level, and their purpose is to determine whether students are on proper trajectory to be ready by the end of grade 12 for work and postsecondary education. Skills tested are not end-of-grade-12 knowledge skills.</p>
Major changes in exit exam policy since the	Maryland will no longer administer the Government High School Assessment (HSA). The last

2009-10 school year for financial reasons	administration was May 2011. Students graduating in the class of 2011 were the last group of students who were required to take and pass the government HSA. English 10, algebra/data analysis and biology continue to be requirements.
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2009-10 school year for <i>other</i> reasons	No
Year first administered	2001
Year diplomas first withheld	<p>The HSA end-of-course exams replaced the Maryland Functional Test, a minimum-competency test students were required to pass to receive a diploma between 1989 and 2004.</p> <p>Beginning in 2009, Maryland required all students to meet the HSA requirement to graduate. This requirement applies to students who entered grade 9 for the first time in 2005-06.</p>
Subjects tested on exam	English 2, algebra/data analysis, and biology effective the 2011-12 school year.
Subjects required for graduation	English 2, algebra/data analysis, and biology effective the 2011-12 school year.
Grade exam first administered	Students must take each exam in the year in which they complete the course in the subject being tested.
Grade(s) exam aligned to	Approximately 10 th
Number of retakes allowed <i>before</i> the end of grade 12	There are four testing opportunities every year beginning in the year the student first takes the course: January, May, August, and October. A fifth administration is offered for seniors in April.

Number of retakes allowed <i>after</i> grade 12	Students enrolled in a Maryland public school can continue to retake the HSA until they are 21.
Is the exit exam used for No Child Left Behind (NCLB) accountability purposes?	The exams in algebra/data analysis and English 2 are used to satisfy NCLB accountability for mathematics and reading/English language arts. Maryland used the state's HSA in biology to satisfy the NCLB requirement for a test in science.
Is the same cut score used for graduation and NCLB accountability purposes?	Yes
Considerations given to changing the cut score needed to pass the exam for graduation purposes in the past year	No
Alternate paths to graduation for students other than English language learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities	<p>The state offers alternatives to passing each of the high school assessments. Specific Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) course exams are acceptable substitutes for specific HSAs, provided students receive the specified MSDE-approved scores on the exams.</p> <p>In November 2007 the state school board approved the Bridge Plan for Academic Validation, which allows students who repeatedly fail the HSAs to instead complete assigned projects for the assessments that they are unable to pass. It is expected that the Bridge Plan will have particular implications for students with disabilities, students with 504 plans, and English language learners by allowing them an alternate method to demonstrate content mastery.</p> <p>Students qualifying for the Bridge Plan will be assigned appropriate project modules, be given an opportunity to complete the project modules assigned, and be subject to a careful review of their work based on detailed state guidelines and scoring rubrics. (Further details of the Bridge Plan can be found at HSAexam.org.)</p>

	<p>Maryland convened a statewide task force for two years to examine alternative high school testing. Based on recommendations made by the task force, the state implemented a plan that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A combined-score option of 1,602 points without a required minimum score for individual assessments (Note: this is for 2011; for 2012 and beyond, the combined score is 1,208) b) The Bridge Plan for Academic Validation c) A modified High School Assessment <p>The GED and the Maryland Adult External High School diploma are available for students who have exited the regular high school program and are not counted as high school graduates.</p>
Determination of eligibility to pursue these alternate paths to graduation	<p>The combined score option is available to all students.</p> <p>The AP and IB option is available to students who take the MSDE-approved courses and meet the score requirements.</p>
Number and percentage of students who used alternate paths in the 2010-11 school year	<p>This data will not be available until at least September 2011.</p>
Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners (ELLs)	<p>No, but English language learners are eligible for the alternate paths available to general education students.</p> <p>There are no alternate paths to graduation for ELL students. However, the following accommodations are provided for instruction and for testing. English language learners have four categories of accommodations available to them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation accommodations allow ELL students to access academic materials in English using alternate modes of access, which help mitigate the students' level of English language proficiency. (Example: a human reader, audio tape, or compact disk recording for verbatim reading of entire test or selected sections of the test) • Response accommodations allow ELL students to complete or respond to activities, assignments, and assessments in the English language in different ways

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	<p>that help mitigate the students' level of English language proficiency. (Examples: a scribe, a bilingual dictionary)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing and scheduling accommodations increase the length of time allowed to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way the time is organized for ELL students. (Examples: extended time, frequent breaks) • Setting accommodations change the location in which a test or assignment is given or the conditions of the assessment setting for ELL students. (Examples: reducing distractions, change of location) <p>The accommodations available to a specific student should be outlined in their ELL plan.</p> <p>Please see the Maryland Accommodations Manual for a discussion and examples of accommodations that are allowable on standardized assessments. (http://hsaexam.org/img/CD%20Content/MDAccommodationsManual.pdf)</p>
Number and percentage of ELL students using alternate paths in 2010-11 school year	This data will not be available until at least September 2011.
Alternate paths to graduation specifically for students with disabilities	<p>A modified HSA, known as the "Mod-HSA," is available to students with disabilities the IEP team has determined eligible. The Mod-HSA is based on course level content standards and modified academic achievement standards. The Mod-HSA incorporates variation in test delivery, such as less complex language, fewer and shorter reading passages, shorter or less difficult questions, and test items with fewer answer choices, to meet the specific learning characteristics of the students in accordance with the department of education guidelines for Modified Academic Achievement Standards.</p> <p>Also, students with disabilities who do not pass the HSA and cannot meet the requirements for a diploma may receive the Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion instead when they exit school. To qualify, these students must have completed four years of high school past grade 8 and must meet one of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student's parents and IEP team reach an agreement that the student has developed the appropriate skills to enter the world of work, act responsibly as a

	<p>citizen, and enjoy a fulfilling life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student will have turned 21 by the end of the current school year. <p>This option was available to students prior to implementation of the HSA.</p> <p>In addition, those students with the most significant cognitive disabilities whom the IEP team has determined eligible will participate in the Alternate Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA). The Alt-MSA is a portfolio assessment tailored to each student's unique instructional needs in reading, mathematics, and science. Students taking the Alt-MSA do not receive a high school diploma. They receive a Maryland High School Certificate of Program Completion.</p> <p>Students with disabilities have four categories of accommodations available to them during both instruction and assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation accommodations allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multi-sensory, tactile, and visual. (Examples: large print materials, human reader) • Response accommodations allow students to complete activities, assignments, and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer. (Examples: scribe, Braille, calculation device) • Timing and scheduling accommodations increase the allowable length of time to complete an assessment or assignment and perhaps change the way the time is organized. (Examples: extended time, multiple breaks) • Setting accommodations change the conditions of the assessment setting. (Examples: reducing distractions, changing location) <p>The accommodations available to a specific student are outlined in their IEP or 504 plan.</p> <p>See the Maryland Accommodations Manual for a discussion and examples of accommodations that are allowable on standardized assessments. http://hsaexam.org/img/CD%20Content/MDAccommodationsManual.pdf</p>
Number and percentage of students with disabilities using alternate paths in the 2010-	This data will not be available until at least September 2011.

11 school year	
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for undergraduate admission purposes?	No
Is the exit exam used by postsecondary institutions for placement purposes?	No
Are students who meet a certain standard on the state exit exam granted exemptions on college placement exams?	No
Can students receive any form of postsecondary education course credit for their performance on the exit exam?	No
Access to initial and cumulative pass rates on high school exit exams	The high school assessment data for 2011 is not yet available. Data is expected to be available in September 2011. The URL address can be provided at that time.
State participation in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)	Maryland has adopted the CCSS in both English language arts and math.
CCSS testing consortia membership	Maryland is a member of PARCC only.
Impact of adoption of the CCSS on high school	Maryland is awaiting further information on PARCC assessments before making any revisions

exit exam policies	to high school exit exam policies.
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in English language arts with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	Maryland is a member of PARCC and therefore will administer PARCC assessments, which are aligned with the CCSS. No decision has been made at this time regarding exit exam requirements.
Plans to replace or realign current exit exam in math with a new assessment aligned to the CCSS	See above.
Plans to maintain current exit exams in subjects other than English language arts and math once the Common Core State Standards are fully implemented	See above.
Will changes in state exit exams mentioned above make the exams more rigorous, less rigorous, or about the same?	We anticipate that PARCC assessments will be more rigorous.
Preparation for students and teachers to transition to new exam	Maryland is developing the Maryland Common Core State Curriculum in English/language arts and mathematics. We also provided professional development for more than 6,000 principals and teachers in English/language arts and mathematics this summer with additional professional development planned for during the school year and for the next two years through the Race to the Top grant. The Maryland Common Core State Curriculum has two main components – the Curriculum Frameworks and the Online Curriculum Toolkit. The Curriculum Frameworks in English/language arts and mathematics define the essential skills and knowledge that students need to achieve the academic goals of the Common Core State Standards. The Online Curriculum Toolkit provides resources that will assist educators in

	designing instructional programs that are aligned with the new curriculum and assessments. The Toolkit will include: model lessons, model units, formative assessments, multi-media resources, intervention and enrichment modules, and online courses for students and educators.
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